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ABSTRACT

The BRONCOS reading improvement project is a Right to Read program operating in six Rhode Island schools (five public, one parochial), designed to improve the communication skills of 1,554 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. The program was designed to accomplish a greater degree of individualized instruction. Existing reading programs were supplemented by the language experience approach to reading and by the use of parent volunteers who worked directly with students, prepared instructional materials, and learned methods for helping their own children in reading. Students' ideas became the reading material for subsequent lessons. Benefits include increased reading competency, enhanced reading enjoyment, and improved self-concepts. In addition to these features of the program, greater reading opportunities were provided for students with the availability of 3,200 additional books and by 400 books distributed free in primary grades. Informal pretest and posttest assessments performed by participating teachers indicated learning improvements in 95% of the students. (Tables, student class activity samples, teacher questionnaires, observation and evaluation forms, and copies of publicity materials are appended.) (DF)

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BURRILLVILLE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project

1976-77

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

August 22, 1977

This report has been prepared by the
Center for Evaluation and Research at Rhode Island College
and is principally the work of
Ms. Nancy C. Zajano.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 1

Project Overview 1
Project Participants 4
Evaluation Design 5
Report Format 7

II. GENERAL OBJECTIVE A 9

Specific Objective #1 9
Specific Objective #2 10
Specific Objective #3 13
Specific Objective #4 14
Specific Objective #5 19

III. GENERAL OBJECTIVE B 23

Specific Objective #1 23
Specific Objective #2 26

IV. GENERAL OBJECTIVE C 32

Specific Objective #1 32

V. GENERAL OBJECTIVE D 35

Specific Objective #1 35

VI. SUMMARY 37

APPENDICES 39

LIST OF TABLES

1. BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project, Staff and Student Participants by School 6

2. Number and Type of Classroom Activities Included in the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project by School 12

3. BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project, Responses to Questions 3 - 10 on the Follow-Up Evaluation Form 17

4. Trips Taken as a Part of the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project 20

5. BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project, Volunteer Assistance Provided by School 24

I. INTRODUCTION

Project Overview

The BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project is a Right to Read program operating in six schools in Burrillville, Rhode Island. The project's purpose is to improve the communication skills of students in grades kindergarten through eight. To achieve this end, the language experience approach to reading has become a supplement to the existing reading program and parent volunteers are assisting teachers in implementing this approach.

The original application for the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project outlined a particular sequence of events which was seen as critical to the successful completion of the project. The first step in this sequence is the introduction of the language experience approach to reading coupled with parental involvement which will eventually lead to more individualized instruction for the students. This instruction will in turn increase the child's participation in his/her learning process and increase the amount of parent-child and teacher-child interaction. These events will cause an increase in the number of successful experiences for the child which will result in the first outcome of increased language competency. The increase in language competency will generate an increase in reading competency, which will in turn result in an improved attitude toward reading and an improved self-concept for the child.

This sequence is also apparent in the objectives of the BRONCOS project. Four general objectives have been delineated and specific objectives have been described under each of these. The general and specific

objectives for the BRONCOS project are as follows:

General Objective A: Students will improve communication skills to facilitate reading.

Specific Objective #1: Students will improve vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Specific Objective #2: Students' observations and impressions will be related to their own experience, verbally, in writing and artistically.

Specific Objective #3: Students will be able to extract information of a predictive value from a given context of either fictional or non-fictional materials.

Specific Objective #4: Teachers in grades K-8 will be able to:
a) identify the basic components of the language experience approach.
b) prepare learning experiences for students utilizing the language experience approach.

Specific Objective #5: Students in grades K-3 will develop clear, basic concepts.

General Objective B: Parents will function in a more positive manner in school.

Specific Objective #1: Parents will provide volunteer help to the classroom teacher and support the staff to meet the individual needs of children.

Specific Objective #2: Communication between home and school and the parent and child will increase.

General Objective C: Students will exhibit an increased desire to read.

Specific Objective #1: Books that are inexpensive will be made readily available to students.

General Objective D: Students will show an improved self-concept.

Specific Objective #1: Students will be provided with an increased number of successful reading experiences.

The timeline for the accomplishment of these objectives was altered from that described in the original proposal due to the lateness of the funding decision. As a result, the following scenario of events took place during the 1976-77 school year.

The two reading consultants to the project who were to provide the teacher inservice training, the two consultants who were to prepare the parent volunteers, and the evaluator were identified during September and October, 1976. Informational meetings to interest teachers in participating in the project were held in each of the six schools during November, 1976. A project aide was identified and began her duties on November 29, 1976. The participating teachers attended a planning session and volunteers were recruited during December, 1976. During January and February, 1977, four inservice sessions were conducted for teachers and the parent volunteers attended an orientation session and four training sessions.

February was also the month for pre assessment of students with formal test instruments. A survey of the reading related activities that parents do at home with their children was conducted then as well.

The reading consultants began providing individual follow-up services to the participating teachers during the last weeks of February as the teachers prepared their classroom activities related to this project. The student activities began the week of March 1, 1977, and the parent volunteers began their work at the same time. The teachers developed an informal means of pre- and posttesting their students on these language experience activities and this pretesting was done during March, 1977.

The parent volunteers also received follow-up services from the volunteer trainers during the March to June time period. The project worked to influence parental at-home activities related to reading during this time

period by providing information on and demonstrations of suggested ways they could improve their children's reading competencies.

During June, 1977, the teachers used their informal posttests to measure the effects of the language experience activities. The formal posttesting with a readministration of the commercial instruments will be conducted during spring of 1978.

Project Participants

The BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project operated in five public schools and one parochial school. The parochial school includes grades 1-8 while the grades included in each of the public schools varies. The student participants in this project are the students of teachers of grades K-8 who chose to become involved in the project. A total of 1,554 students are included, a figure which represents 77% of the total K-8 student population in Burrillville. An examination of the reading subtest scores of participating children in grades 4-8 on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills revealed that 51% of the public school children scored at least one year below grade level. (Iowa scores are not available for children in grades 1-3 because these children were too young to test in January, 1976, when the Iowa tests were administered.) Test scores from the parochial school indicate that 19% of the grade 4-8 students scored one or more years below grade level in reading.

The professional staff participants include 47 individuals. Of these, two are principals and 36 are classroom teachers with students regularly assigned to them. The remaining nine staff members include four remedial reading teachers, two guidance counselors, an industrial arts teacher, an art teacher, and a substitute teacher. The project director is also a

full-time reading teacher at the junior high school. She is assisted by a full-time project aide. Table 1 summarizes the number of professional staff members and student participants by school.

In addition to the professional staff members involved in this project, a total of 24 volunteers contributed their time by working within the schools with children and an additional 23 volunteers participated by making instructional games and other materials that were subsequently used in the classrooms.

Evaluation Design

The evaluation activities for the BRONCOS project focused on determining whether each of the project's objectives was accomplished. As a result of the delay in the initial funding of this project and the altered timeline reported above, it was not feasible to conduct a formal pre and post assessment of the student outcomes during the 1976-77 school year. The student activities did not begin until March, 1977, and a June assessment of their effect with a standardized instrument was inappropriate. Instead, the pretesting with formal instruments was done in February, 1977, and the posttesting with these instruments is scheduled for spring, 1978. As an informal measure of student progress during the 1976-77 school year, the participating teachers devised their own pre and post assessment measures which were closely related to the specific language experience activities going on in their classrooms. The results of these assessments are reported in this document.

The 1976-77 project year was largely devoted to the preparation of teachers and parent volunteers in the language experience approach and in getting the classroom activities which used this approach underway.

TABLE 1

BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project
Staff and Student Participants by School

School (Grade Span)	Number of Participating Staff Members	Number of Participating Students
Sweeney (K)	2	96
Levy (1 and 2)	8	158
Pascoag (K, 3 and 4)	10	243
Callahan (4, 5 and 6)	7	477
Burrillville Junior High School (7 and 8)	11	435
St. Joseph (1 - 6)	9	145
Total	47	1,554*

*77% of total Burrillville K - 8 student population.

Consequently, the evaluation activities focused on the inservice and training sessions, the selection of instruments for and the coordination of the pretesting of students, and the observation of the language experience method being used by teachers and volunteers in the classrooms. Interviews with project participants, reviews of student work and project records, and an end-of-the-year questionnaire were also used to note the efforts being made to accomplish each of the project's objectives. Since several of the student objectives cannot be completely assessed until the formal posttesting occurs next spring, the results reported in this document are more appropriately viewed as a summary of the first year's implementation of the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project rather than a final statement regarding its effect.

Report Format

An interim report was prepared for this project in March, 1977. The status of each of the project's objectives was noted at that time and the student pretest results from the formal testing were reported. As a final report, this document describes the project's status on each objective as of August, 1977, and summarizes the information presented in the interim report. The following sections describe the results for each of the project's objectives and within these results includes the publicity given to its activities and the materials developed as a result of the project.

Arrangements have been made with the Rhode Island Right to Read office to disseminate these evaluation reports through the Education Research Information Center (ERIC). The interim report has already been requested by and sent to the Right to Read director in Brooklyn, New York, and requests for copies of the handbook developed for the parent volunteers and other

information presented to parents have been received from three out-of-state and three Rhode Island communities.

II. GENERAL OBJECTIVE A

STUDENTS WILL IMPROVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO FACILITATE READING.

Specific Objective #1: Students will improve vocabulary and comprehension skills.

To assess the specific objective of an improvement in students' vocabulary and comprehension skills, both formal and informal instruments were used. The comprehension subtest of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test provided the formal assessment for this objective. A pretest was administered in February, 1977, to 1,069 students in grades one through seven. A posttest will be administered in spring, 1978, with this instrument. Three different levels of the Stanford test were used to accommodate the grade spans of the participating students. A detailed description of the features of the test and the testing procedures is provided in the Interim Report (pages 4-6). The pretest results were also discussed in the Interim Report and the tables summarizing these results are included in Appendix A. The tables provide the number tested, mean score, standard deviation, and percentile and stanine rankings for students at each grade level.

In addition to the formal assessment of this objective, each teacher devised a pre-/posttest for the language experience activities being done in his/her classroom. These activities were considered individual "projects" and the reading consultants to the Right to Read program assisted the teachers in devising and implementing these projects.

Of the 47 professional staff participants, 40 teachers implemented projects. (The remaining seven persons included two principals, two guidance counselors, an industrial arts teacher, a remedial reading teacher, and a

substitute teacher.) In four cases, teachers worked together to implement the activities; in the others they worked alone. In all cases, the projects were to focus on using the child's own language and experience as the vehicle for improving his/her vocabulary and comprehension skills.

A total of 33 different projects were originally submitted to the consultants. Of these, 29 reported some form of a pretest and 20 had a posttest. The particular assessment used was determined by the nature of the classroom project. For some children, the assessment consisted of the number of words they could correctly identify in the language experience stories they had dictated. For others, the assessment considered the average sentence length in their creative writing assignments. The proportion of correct punctuation marks, proper capitalization, complete sentences, etc., was the means of charting the growth of other students. For still others, the measure of growth in vocabulary and comprehension was the "final product" produced. This product was often a book of stories, a research report on a topic of interest, a dramatization, a series of poems, or several editions of a class newspaper. Each child would go through several drafts before completing the final product and each draft was assessed for improvement.

Of the 20 projects which had posttest results recorded, 95% (all but one) indicated improvement over the pretest. A more detailed description of these projects is included below as a part of Specific Objective #2.

Specific Objective #2: Students' observations and impressions will be related to their own experiences verbally, in writing and artistically.

This specific objective pertains to the primary purpose of this Right to Read program, namely the language experience approach to reading which

uses a student's own expressions as his/her reading material. The 40 participating teachers used a variety of approaches to achieve this end. In order to describe the 33 different projects submitted, they have been classified into five broad categories of activities. These categories include (1) language experience stories; (2) the production of magazines, newspapers, or "books"; (3) the researching of a topic for an oral presentation to classmates; (4) creative writing and/or dramatics; and (5) comprehension activities. All but two of the 33 projects fell into one of these five categories. The remaining two included a geography game and an activity designed to have students learn the vocabulary used in various trades (e.g., plumbing). Table 2 reports the number of activities in each of the five categories worked on by teachers in the six participating schools. Because four groups of teachers did more than one type of activity within their "project," there are 37 rather than 33 entries.

As indicated in Table 2, the projects included activities which primarily sought to have children communicate their own experiences or the ideas they had researched or their own version of a familiar story. Once the ideas were expressed verbally, they were usually written down, either by the children themselves or by teachers or volunteers. The written product was then usually illustrated by the child. The next step was to have the children read what they had written or act it out or give an oral presentation to their classmates. These activities provided practice in all the forms of communication in addition to the basic vocabulary and comprehension skills which underlie communication.

The classroom projects implemented by the teachers were designed to meet the needs of the children who were underachieving in reading without removing them from the classroom or identifying them within the classroom

TABLE 2

Number and Type of Classroom Activities
Included in the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project
By School*

School	Grade Span	Language Experience Stories	Magazines, Newspapers, Books	Research Topic and Presentation	Creative Writing/ Dramatics	Comprehension Activities
Sweeney	K	2	-	-	-	-
Levy	1-2	3	-	1	1	1
Pascoag	K,3-4	3	-	1	-	3
Callahan	4-6	2	3	-	2	-
St. Joseph	1-6	3	1	-	-	1
Jr. High	7-8	-	2	1	3	2
Total		13	6	3	6	7

"Unique" Projects = 2

Grand Total = 37

*Four "classroom projects" included activities in more than one of the five categories.

in other than routine classroom groupings. Although some children received more intensive assistance than others, all children in the participating classrooms benefited from the Right to Read activities. Of the 1,554 children who participated in the program, 814 were given some additional attention and assistance.

In addition to noting the nature of the classroom projects, 22 of the 40 participating teachers were observed and/or interviewed as another means of evaluating this specific objective. During these sessions, the evaluator also reviewed examples of student work, including such items as the language experience stories and the word banks which accompany them, the science experiments written by one group of students, several editions of a school newspaper, oral presentations by students of a topic they had researched, written book reports, poems, and a videotape of a creative dramatics session. Other examples of student work were also submitted to the evaluator after the observation sessions. In all, student work from 28 different teachers was reviewed. Abbreviated samples of the students' work are included in Appendix B and the observation and interview forms used are included in Appendix C. The observations, interviews, and student work provided ample evidence that this objective was being accomplished.

Specific Objective #3: Students will be able to extract information of a predictive value from a given context of either fictional or non-fictional materials.

This objective relates to a specific teaching strategy in which an adult asks a student questions about the reading material prior to the actual reading of the material. Also known as Directed Reading Thinking Activities (DRTA), this method is used to enhance a student's comprehension

of what is read. This approach was incorporated by many of the teachers in the BRONCOS project. The teacher inservice sessions included examples of how to use this strategy. It was also used extensively by six of the seven teachers whose classroom projects fell into the category of "comprehension activities" (see Table 2). During interview sessions, ten teachers were directly asked whether they used this approach and all ten responded that they did. Five people reported using this approach in their project summaries and others indicated on the follow-up questionnaire that it was a strategy they had used as a result of the Right to Read inservice sessions. Although some of these numbers included the same teachers, a variety of sources indicate that it was a popular technique.

Volunteers were also given some instruction in this approach during their training sessions and the project aide reported that she had observed some volunteers using this technique.

Specific Objective #4: Teachers in grades K-8 will be able to:
a) identify the basic components of the language experience approach; and
b) prepare learning experiences for students utilizing the language experience approach.

The first portion of this objective was assessed at the conclusion of the five inservice sessions provided for teachers between December, 1976, and February, 1977. At that time, 85% of the 40 participants returning evaluation forms satisfactorily responded to the question related to the components of the language experience approach. (See pages 10-17 of the Interim Report for a detailed description of these sessions and the evaluation results.)

Whether or not the teachers had prepared learning experiences which used the language experience approach was evaluated through a variety of

indices. The observation and interview sessions and the review of students' work noted above were the primary sources of this information. Supplementing these were the project summaries submitted to the reading consultants and responses to questions on the follow-up evaluation form which was distributed to participating teachers at the end of the school year.

As noted earlier, 33 different projects were implemented in six schools as a part of the Burrillville Right to Read efforts. A total of 40 teachers participated in the direct implementation of these projects. The projects have been classified into five categories listed in Table 2, but each one was unique and was developed around the particular concerns of the teachers and their students. A total of 814 students have received specific and intensive help from the participating teachers and volunteers but all 1,554 students included in the BRONCOS program have been affected.

Additional examples of the individual classroom projects include a science magazine; a career book of "What I'll Be" stories; a book of animal stories written by fourth graders for younger children; a series of books for young children written, illustrated, and bound by junior high students; and the rewriting of fairy tales with a new twist, for example, "Goldiroid and the Three Robots."

In addition to doing individual projects, the participating teachers added a variety of techniques to their daily instruction as a result of the Right to Read inservice and follow-up consultation sessions. The first question on the end-of-the-year questionnaire asked the teachers to identify which teaching strategies they had used as a result of the Right to Read sessions. A total of 33 different strategies were listed by the 34 teachers who responded to this question. The most common of these are listed below:

Language Experience Stories (13)
Directed Reading Thinking Activities (DRTA) (13)
Listening games and exercises (4)
Creative dramatics (4)
Student magazine/newspaper (3)

Teachers were then asked if they had used any materials presented or identified at the sessions and 80% of the 35 respondents indicated that they had. The paperback and hardbound books purchased through project funding were listed 25 times in response to this question. Other materials used to write, tape record, type, or act out stories told by students were mentioned by most teachers. Forty-four responses were recorded for such items as card files, index cards, the primary typewriter, notebooks, puppets, construction paper, etc. A total of 15 entries were listed under the category of professional materials for teachers to use in preparing lessons.

The remaining questions on the follow-up evaluation form concerned the individual consultations provided the participating teachers by the reading consultants who had conducted the original inservice sessions. Table 3 reports the results for these questions.

As indicated in Table 3, the 35 respondents reported that they met individually with a consultant an average of 4.4 times. For half of these sessions a substitute was available to relieve them of their classroom duties while they talked to the consultant. When asked if one of the consultants had worked with their students to demonstrate teaching strategies, 75% replied that he/she had and these demonstrations were seen as very useful by the majority of respondents.

In general, the series of follow-up consulting sessions was positively received and viewed as quite essential to the Right to Read efforts by most teachers. When asked if they had done anything differently with their

TABLE 3

BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project
Responses to Questions 3 - 10 on the Follow-Up Evaluation Form

Item	Number Responding	Response	
3. How many times did you meet with the consultant at your school?	35	4.4	Average number of times
		3-8	Range
4. How many times did a substitute (or some other staff member) take over your class while you talked to the consultant?	34	2.3	Average number of times
		0-5	Range
5. a. Did the consultant work with your students to demonstrate strategies you might use?	35	74.3%	Yes
		25.7%	No
b. If yes, how useful did you find the demonstration?	26	---	1 (Not at all)
		3.8%	2
		3.8%	3 (Somewhat)
		30.8%	4
		61.5%	5 (Very much)
6. In general, how useful did you find the series of follow-up consulting sessions?	35	---	1 (Not at all)
		2.8%	2
		17.1%	3 (Somewhat)
		31.4%	4
		48.6%	5 (Very much)
7. How essential do you think these follow-up services were to your Right to Read efforts?	35	---	1 (Not at all)
		2.8%	2
		11.4%	3 (Somewhat)
		40.0%	4
		45.7%	5 (Very much)
8. Have you done anything differently with your students as a result of the follow-up consulting sessions?	34	2.9%	1 (Not at all)
		2.9%	2
		20.6%	3 (Somewhat)
		41.2%	4
		32.4%	5 (Very much)

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Item	Number Responding	Response
9. What other topics would you like to see addressed in future Right to Read inservice sessions?	3	Reading readiness
	3	Children's literature
	2	New ideas for teaching reading
	2	Comprehension skills
	2	Continue as 's with language experience
	2	Use of trade books
	1	Vocabulary development
	1	More volunteers
	1	Help for slower readers in comprehension
	1	Reading to extract information, critical reading, how to take notes, study for exams
	1	Content area reading
10. Please add any additional comments you would like to make. (Only the most frequent responses are recorded here.)	7	Very useful, helpful, enjoyable.
	3	Volunteers were extremely helpful, would like more of them.
	3	The course was worth more than one credit.
	3	Already knew the information given.
	2	The follow-up sessions were essential.

students as a result of the consulting, the teachers' responses varied but the majority of them were in the "somewhat" to "very much" range. Table 3 also lists all the respondents' suggestions for future inservice sessions and reports the most frequent additional comments made. The single most frequent remark noted the usefulness of the Right to Read inservice sessions. A copy of the follow-up evaluation form is included in Appendix C.

Specific Objective #5: Students in grades K-3 will develop clear, basic concepts.

This objective refers to the experiences of children resulting from the trips and excursions funded by this grant. A total of 572 individual children were able to go on a trip as a result of this project. (One group of 20 children participated in two trips.) Trips to eight different places were taken during the months of May and June, 1977. Table 4 reports the number and grade level of children going to each of the eight places. (In addition, 100 third graders at Pascoag School had an "athletic day" on the school grounds which featured 13 different "events" in which the children could participate.)

Six teachers submitted summaries of the excursions made by their classes and some of these included examples of the stories written by the children in response to the experience. Other teachers quoted the children's enthusiastic responses and one kindergarten teacher remarked that for some of her students, this was the first trip away from home. The kindergarten children who visited the school they will attend next year as first graders (approximately five miles away) wrote a language experience story about their day. The highlights of their story included doing "papers" at the desk, finding out where they will eat lunch, and how the sinks in the

TABLE 4

Trips Taken as a Part of the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project

School	Grade Level	Number of Students	Place Visited
Sweeney	K	94	Southwick Animal Farm
Levy	1	83	New England Aquarium
	2	82	Worcester Science Center
Pascoag	K	98	Austin T. Levy School
	3	45	Mystic Seaport
	3	57	New England Aquarium
St. Joseph	1,2,3,4	70	Boston Museum of Science
	4,5,6	63*	Woonsocket Call Newspaper Office
Total		572*	

*The total number does not repeat the 20 fourth graders from the St. Joseph School who appear twice in the table.

bathroom work, and reminded everyone involved with them how important the apparently "little" things are to a five year old. A number of parents thanked the teachers for using this way to relieve the anxiety the children would have felt all summer as they wondered about their new school.

In addition to the trip summaries submitted by the teachers, the evaluator observed children preparing for or reacting to trips in five different classrooms. The preparation and follow-up activities usually included writing stories and making drawings about what the students expected to see or had seen. The children observed were very excited as they talked about the trips and even usually shy children had something to say about the experience. In one classroom, on the day before a trip to the aquarium, the children were writing a story about what they expected to see. The most common anticipated item was a mermaid. Their follow-up stories, however, did not seem to reveal any disappointment over the lack of a mermaid, for many other exciting items had been substituted.

In summary, the first general objective of the BRONCOS project, to improve communication skills to facilitate reading, has been successfully accomplished to date. Although the formal post assessment of the students' reading and vocabulary skills with the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test will occur after the continuation of the project activities during the 1977-78 school year, the informal pre- and posttesting indicated an improvement in 95% of the cases. In addition, the children were given the opportunity to use their own experiences as the subject matter for their reading material and the technique of asking students to predict the information or events to be found in a reading selection has become a popular instructional strategy. The participating teachers have demonstrated

their ability to identify the basic components of the language experience approach and to prepare learning experiences for students utilizing this approach. The experiential backgrounds of 572 children have been enhanced by excursions funded by this grant. The classroom activities associated with preparing for and reacting to the trips have provided an additional means of improving the communication skills of the participating students.

III. GENERAL OBJECTIVE B

PARENTS WILL FUNCTION IN A MORE POSITIVE MANNER IN SCHOOL.

The parental involvement in the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project had two separate emphases. The first pertained to the activities of parent volunteers both within and outside the school and the second concerned the reading related activities that parents could do at home with their children. A specific objective was written for each of these concerns.

Specific Objective #1: Parents will provide volunteer help to the classroom teachers and support the staff to meet individual needs.

A total of 24 volunteers provided their services to teachers and children in 17 different classrooms in five schools. An additional 23 volunteers worked indirectly for children by developing materials that teachers and children could use within the classroom.

The process of recruiting and training parent volunteers was described in detail in the Interim Report (pages 18-25). To summarize this information, a total of 38 potential volunteers attended all or some of five preparatory sessions provided by two volunteer trainers. The sessions were well received with 95% indicating that the procedures for volunteering were clearly specified and 100% recommending this type of training to others.

The actual volunteering began during the week of March 1, 1977, and continued until the week of June 13, 1977. During this time the volunteer trainers continued to support the volunteers both by meeting with them individually at the schools and through telephone conversations. Another group meeting was held in April, 1977, to allow volunteers to get together,

share experiences, and have questions answered. Additional information regarding independent reading and creative writing activities was also provided during this session.

Over 610 hours of assistance were provided by the volunteers during the 14 school weeks between March and June, 1977. On the average, this figure converts to 1.82 hours per week provided by each of the 24 volunteers. Table 5 reports the number of volunteers operating in each school and the average number of hours per week they offered to teachers and students.

TABLE 5

BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project
Volunteer Assistance Provided by School

School	Number of Volunteers	Average Hours Per Week
Levy	8	1.10
Pascoag	10	2.47
Callahan	2	1.14
St. Joseph	2	2.64
Junior High	2	1.27
Total	24	1.82

The volunteers primarily worked with individual children and their language experience stories. They provided individual attention as they encouraged a child to talk about an incident or an object that was important to him or her. The recording of the child's spoken thoughts and the subsequent printing or typing of them to provide the reading material for

the next day's lesson were usually the types of activities teachers said they could not have done without volunteer assistance. Volunteers were also available to read children's stories with them and transfer the words they knew onto index cards for filing in a "word bank." These words were continually reviewed and provided a constant record of the growth of the child's reading vocabulary.

Volunteers also provided assistance for other classroom projects including the typing of newspaper and magazine articles and helping children with comprehension exercises.

At the end of the year, the volunteer trainers asked each volunteer to return a feedback form. The comments on the 15 forms that were returned indicated that the volunteers enjoyed their work very much, saw positive changes in the students they worked with, and felt the program was very beneficial. They learned a great deal about the reading process and found that they worked well with the teachers. They wished that they had had more time to discuss the progress of individual children with the classroom teachers and also asked for more suggestions for working with older children.

The classroom teachers were very positive about the assistance provided by the volunteers. Feedback during the interview sessions, on the follow-up questionnaires, and in written project summaries commended the work the volunteers had done and asked for more.

The previous description reported the activities of the 24 volunteers who worked directly in the schools. An additional 23 people volunteered their time to develop materials that were used by teachers and students within the classrooms. Two series of workshops were held in the evenings from February to June, 1977. These sessions were funded through a Rhode Island Right to Read grant. The first workshop included six sessions

during which 13 volunteers designed and produced instructional games and materials which were then given to classroom teachers. (The evaluator observed these materials being used on a number of occasions.) The second workshop focused on developing slide and audio materials in order to transfer a children's book into a slide/tape presentation. Ten volunteers participated in this series of four sessions.

Recognition of the contributions made by the volunteers occurred during a "Coffee and..." gathering on June 14, 1977. The superintendent of the Burrillville School Department presented awards to each of the volunteers and a series of slides depicting the numerous Right to Read activities over the course of the year were shown. A display of the many materials provided to volunteers and other community members was also available. A June 17, 1977, article in the Woonsocket Call described the session and listed the names of the volunteers (Appendix E).

Including parents in the day-to-day functioning of the school was a benefit recognized by many people as a side effect of this Right to Read project. Influencing the parental at-home involvement in the reading process was also an objective of the project and was the focus of the second specific objective related to parents.

Specific Objective #2: Communication between home and school and parent and child will be increased.

An increase in the communication between the home and school was the focus of a number of Right to Read activities over the course of the year. The emphasis was placed on providing parents with very specific information about how they could help their children learn to read. This information took the form of giving presentations at public gatherings; distributing printed materials; holding "coffee hours" to demonstrate ideas and

activities; and providing for newspaper, radio, and T.V. spots to stress the importance of the parental role in the reading process.

The project director addressed a November, 1976, "Friends of the Library" meeting and a December, 1976, Lions Club meeting to point out the role parents can play in stimulating an interest in books. The newspaper coverage given to these events also helped inform the public about the "Reading Is Fundamental" project being started as a complement to the Right to Read program.

A total of eight pamphlets were made available to the public through the local health care center during the months of February to June, 1977. The focus of the pamphlets was to give parents very specific ideas on how they can help their children with reading. In addition to the five pamphlets described in the Interim Report (pages 30-31), the following titles were made available: Reading in the Home (Scholastic), Your Home Is Your Child's First School and You Can Encourage Your Child to Read (International Reading Association).

In addition to using the local health center as a distribution point, all the pamphlets were also to be found at the town libraries, parent-teacher conferences, and volunteer meetings.

One of the primary events related to this objective was a series of five "coffee hours" provided for parents of preschoolers. The coffee hours included parents, teachers, community nurse, social worker, and the volunteer trainers as panelists to provide ideas and demonstrate activities that parents could use at home to help preschoolers begin the reading process.

Appendix F includes the flier which describes the topic and panelists for each of the five sessions. The flier was sent home in early April with children in grades K-4 who had siblings close to school age. It was also

posted at local churches and at the health center. Two articles appeared in the Woonsocket Call newspaper prior to the five sessions and an additional three articles appeared as a follow-up to the first session and reminders about subsequent ones. Copies of these articles can also be found in Appendix F.

A total of 26 different parents attended one or more of the five sessions. The number attending varied from 8 to 18 for any one session, and parents attended an average of 2.8 sessions. A panel of three mothers addressed the first gathering on April 27, 1977, to provide some examples of the things they do at home with their children. Two reading teachers from the Levy and Pascoag schools served as moderators and the 15 parents in attendance joined in the discussion. A booklet of activities entitled Recipes for Fun was distributed along with other ideas for making paste, playdough, and playing "bingo" on cards with pictures of familiar objects instead of numbers.

The second session was titled "Read Me a Story" and featured a reading teacher and two librarians who distributed an extensive collection of 16 illustrated poems interspersed within an annotated bibliography of 137 titles of recommended children's books. Acquired from the Library Media Examination Center in Kingston, Pennsylvania, the collection recommended books in each of 13 categories including fantasy, animals, and "stories without words."

The following week's session concerned readiness skills and a kindergarten and reading teacher passed out a booklet entitled Helping Your Child Discover Words and Language in addition to small Random House books to each of the 18 parents attending. The fourth session focused on "A Healthy Me" and featured a nurse and social worker from the local health center. Another

booklet, Help Your Children Discover Themselves, focused on activities to build a child's self-confidence and capabilities.

The fifth and final session occurred on May 25, 1977. The question, "What will we do this summer?" was answered by the volunteer trainers who developed calendars for July and August with a suggested activity filled in for each day. The 59 suggestions included such things as: "Go for a walk and listen for five different sounds," "Count the chairs in your house," and "Write the words to a song your child knows." Several examples of the materials distributed during these coffee hour sessions are included in Appendix G.

The final Right to Read activity for the school year was a story hour provided for the children registered for the 1977-78 kindergarten classes. The Levy School librarian held two such sessions on June 20, 1977.

In addition to direct contact with parents through presentations at public gatherings and at coffee hours sponsored by the schools, the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project has used the local media to publicize the role parents can play in the reading process. The generous coverage given each of the Right to Read events by the Woonsocket Call newspaper has been extended to include the printing of a series of ten articles about reading education. The articles were made available from the International Reading Association (IRA) and include the following titles:

Preschool Activities Foster Reading
Beginning Reading Instruction
Television and Children's Literature
Parents Have a Dual Role
Standardized Tests and Their Scores
Secondary Reading
Reading and Learning Disabilities
Family Reading Activities
How to Become Involved
How Well Are We Doing?

The Right to Read program also received publicity in the spring, 1977, issue of "The Bulletin Board," a newsletter distributed by the Burrillville School Committee. The article described the various Right to Read activities and the Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) project established by volunteer parents as a complement to the BRONCOS project.

Radio and television stations have also been used to "get the word out." A Providence, Rhode Island, radio station (WICE) has aired three public service announcements about reading as a result of requests from the Right to Read director. The announcements were made available from the IRA which is also sending a tape of three announcements designed for television to WSBE-TV in Providence.

The project director was also a panelist on a televised program entitled "Education Today." Aired locally prior to the NBC "Today" program on July 1, 1977, the discussion concerned the influence parents could exert in improving the reading competencies of their children. The program was rebroadcast at 10 a.m. on the following Sunday.

The desired outcome of these efforts to contact parents is to increase the communication between parent and child as one way of improving the child's readiness and ability to read. To determine whether the collective efforts of newspaper articles, radio and T.V. spots, presentations, demonstrations, and printed materials have increased the number of reading related activities going on in Burrillville homes, a pre and post assessment of these activities is being conducted.

In February, 1977, a randomly selected 20% sample of Burrillville parents with school age children was sent a questionnaire. The questions asked the parents to indicate the number of times they did eleven different reading related activities with their children. The procedures for distributing this questionnaire and a detailed discussion of the results are

included in the Interim Report (pages 25-29). The table summarizing the results is also included in Appendix H of this report. A "posttest" with the same instrument will be conducted in February, 1978, to determine if there has been a change in the number of times parents do these activities with their children.

In summary, the results presented above indicate that parents are "functioning in a more positive manner in schools" by volunteering over 610 hours of assistance to students and teachers and by developing instructional materials for use in the classrooms. In addition, the BRONCOS project has endeavored to increase the number of reading related activities that parents do at home with their children by providing specific suggestions of how parents can help. These suggestions have been disseminated through booklets, coffee hour demonstrations, newspaper articles, radio and television announcements, and presentations to public gatherings. A survey to determine the number of times a random sample of parents do eleven reading related activities was conducted in February, 1977. A similar survey will be conducted again in February, 1978, to assess whether an increase in the number of these activities has occurred.

IV. GENERAL OBJECTIVE C

STUDENTS WILL EXHIBIT AN INCREASED DESIRE TO READ.

An assessment of the Burrillville students' attitude toward reading was made in February, 1977, as a pretest for the Right to Read efforts related to this general objective. An Inventory of Reading Attitude (San Diego Public Schools) and the Estes Reading Attitude Scale (Journal of Reading, November, 1971) were used for students in grades one to six and grade seven respectively. The tables summarizing the results of this pretest are included in Appendix I. These instruments will be administered again in spring, 1978, as a posttest.

An additional measure of the students' attitude twoard reading was provided by the teachers during the evaluator's interviews with them and within their project summaries. A number of teachers described the children's enthusiasm toward the language experience activities and found that the children were much more motivated to do this type of work. Their increased interest was apparent in their desire to read both the stories written by themselves and others and the books that provided them with information for a research topic. The kindergarten teachers were especially gratified to note the interest in words and books displayed by their students as the students saw their thoughts appearing in their own "books."

The specific objective related to an increased desire to read concerned making books available to children.

Specific Objective #1: Books that are inexpensive will be made readily available to students.

A total of 3,283 books, mostly paperbacks, were made available to Burrillville students as a result of this project. The books were generally in use in all schools during April, 1977, and were an instant success with the students. In many cases, classroom libraries were set up with a rack of these books. The books generally attracted children the first thing in the morning and between assignments. Students in the junior high school who were not directly involved in the BRONCOS project began appearing in the various classrooms where the books were kept and the book racks observed by the evaluator were generally only one-third full because students had the books with them.

The Levy and Junior High schools have implemented a school-wide "U.S.S.R." time. For 15 minutes there is "Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading" during which everyone in the school stops all other activities and reads something for enjoyment. An initial experiment with this approach proved it successful enough to become a weekly feature in the school schedule. The Right to Read books are especially popular during this time.

To add to the number of books made available to students, a Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) project began in Burrillville during November, 1976. Parent volunteers have organized and maintained the fund-raising efforts which resulted in a free book being distributed to all kindergarten, first and second grade children in the Burrillville schools during June, 1977. The volunteers working on this project intend to repeat this distribution of almost 400 free books twice during the next school year.

A handout describing the RIF program was enclosed with each free book and two articles and a picture about the project appeared in the Woonsocket Call. Appendix J includes copies of the handout, the newspaper articles, and a thank you note prepared by a group of recipients.

As another means of assessing the students' desire to read, the

circulation figures from the two public and two school libraries were recorded. A review of the figures indicated that the circulation of books increased during the month of February and reached a high point in March. The figures decreased during April, the month the Right to Read books were distributed, and remained at approximately the same point in May. During April, the library pass policy at the Junior High School also became more restrictive and this change may have influenced the circulation figures.

The specific objective of making books readily available to students has been successfully accomplished through the addition of over 3,200 Right to Read books and 400 RIF books to the Burrillville schools and homes. The accomplishment of the general objective of increasing the students' desire to read has been informally noted by teachers of the participating students and will be formally posttested with reading attitude instruments during spring of 1978.

V. GENERAL OBJECTIVE D

STUDENTS WILL SHOW AN IMPROVED SELF-CONCEPT.

The formal pre assessment of this general objective took place in February, 1977, with the administration of the Self Appraisal Inventory (Instructional Objectives Exchange). Three levels of this instrument (primary, intermediate, and secondary) were used to assess students in grades one through seven. The tables reporting the results of this pre assessment are included in Appendix K. The formal posttesting of this objective will take place in spring, 1978. A specific objective was also written to relate this general goal to reading.

Specific Objective #1: Students will be provided with an increased number of successful reading experiences.

The 33 individual projects implemented by 40 Burrillville teachers as a part of the Right to Read program were specifically designed to use the children's own experiences as part of the reading process. This direct recognition of the worth of their own feelings, ideas, and interests not only heightened their sense of self-esteem but increased their motivation toward and success with the particular reading task at hand.

In addition to the improvement noted in 95% of the 20 cases in which an informal posttest was administered, the teachers reported the enthusiasm of the children toward their project-related assignments and the feelings of success that were being generated as a result. This enthusiasm was noted during the evaluator's observation and interview visits and was frequently included in the project summaries submitted by the teachers.

In one case, when a teacher was asked how long she planned to continue her project, she responded that she couldn't stop because the children were bringing in new ideas of what they would write about next every day.

All 17 of the teachers who were asked during interviews if they planned to continue doing similar types of activities next year indicated that they did, noting that the enthusiastic response of the students was one of their primary reasons for doing so.

One important factor in providing students with more successful reading experiences was the work of the volunteers. The individual attention given to each child as he/she sat down with a volunteer to dictate a story or work on an assignment was frequently noted as a very beneficial aspect of the program. As one of the kindergarten teachers phrased it, the children "blossomed with the individual attention that they received from the volunteers."

Even though the "formal" assessment of an improved self-concept will not occur until the spring of 1978 with a readministration of the Self Appraisal Inventory, the change noted by the teachers and volunteers who worked with the students indicates that this objective is already being accomplished.

VI. SUMMARY

Although the formal post assessments of student improvement in vocabulary and comprehension skills, desire to read, and self-concept remain to be conducted during the subsequent school year, the 1976-77 BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project has accomplished all of its intended objectives at this time.

The participating teachers have been prepared in the language experience approach to reading and have implemented this approach in their classrooms. With the assistance of parent volunteers they have provided more individualized reading experiences during which students have been able to communicate their own experiences and ideas and have had these expressions become the reading material for subsequent lessons. The Directed Reading Thinking Activities have become a popular technique in the instruction of Burrillville students as a means of improving their comprehension skills. Informal pre and post assessments were developed by the participating teachers to measure the effects of the particular language experience activities used in their classrooms. An improvement was noted for 95% of the 20 individual projects which reported these posttest data. Over 570 students have been able to go on trips as a result of these projects and the occasion has enhanced their experiential backgrounds.

Parent volunteers have provided assistance both in the schools by working directly with students and outside as they prepared instructional materials for use by teachers and students. The project has also provided parents with specific ideas of how they can help their children with reading through the dissemination of printed materials, radio and T.V. announcements, and five demonstration sessions. Thorough coverage by a local

newspaper of all Right to Read activities has also helped to inform parents of their important role in the reading process. A pre assessment of parental activity in this regard occurred in February, 1977, and a post assessment will be conducted in February, 1978.

Efforts to increase a child's desire to read have included making over 3,200 additional books available to students within the school and the distribution of a free book to each of approximately 400 primary age children via a RIF project which complemented the Right to Read effort. The improvement in the students' self-concept has been related to providing them with more successful reading experiences. Participating teachers and the evaluator have observed the enthusiastic way in which students approach the activities which focus on their own lives or reflect their own thoughts or feelings about a topic. The teachers have noted that these experiences have improved the children's self-confidence as they approach the next reading related task.

Although these findings must be considered tentative until the final assessment of the project's objectives takes place during the 1977-78 school year, it is reasonable to conclude at this time that the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project has successfully completed each of the objectives intended for the 1976-77 school year and if the project participants continue to devote their efforts to these tasks during the subsequent school year the desired improvements for students should be realized.

APPENDIX A

Pretest Results from the Comprehension Subtest of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test. Grades One through Seven.

TABLE 2

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Reading Comprehension Subtest of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
(Red Level)
Pretest Mean Scaled Scores and Standard Deviations
With Corresponding Percentile and Stanine Scores
For Grades One and Two

Grade/School	Number Tested	Mean Scaled Score	Standard Deviation	National Norms[a] Percentile	Stanine
One					
Levy	56	198	108		
St. Joseph	13	274	45		
Total	69	213	103	b	b
Two					
Levy	73	407	73	44	5
St. Joseph	14	439	73	56	5
Total	87	412	73	46	5

[a]The national norms corresponding to the mean scores of Burrillville students should be interpreted with caution since the time of testing and the local population are not consistent with those of the national sample.

[b]No norms available.

TABLE 3

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Reading Comprehension Subtest of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
(Green Level)
Pretest Mean Scaled Scores and Standard Deviations
With Corresponding Percentile and Stanine Scores
For Grades Three and Four

Grade/School	Number Tested	Mean Scaled Score	Standard Deviation	National Norms[a] Percentile	Stanine
Three					
Pascoag	96	453	55	45	5
St. Joseph	17	461	54	50	5
Total	113	454	55	46	5
Four					
Pascoag	27	444	40	26	4
Callahan	85	481	50	48	5
St. Joseph	20	463	117	37	4
Total	132	471	64	42	5

[a]The national norms corresponding to the mean scores of Burrillville students should be interpreted with caution since the time of testing and the local population are not consistent with those of the national sample.

TABLE 4

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Reading Comprehension Subtest of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (Level II)
Pretest Raw Scores and Standard Deviations
With Corresponding Percentile and Stanine Scores
For Grades Five, Six and Seven

Grade/School	Number Tested	Mean Raw Score	Standard Deviation	National Norms[a]	
				Percentile	Stanine
Five					
Callahan	190	32	10.27	22	3
St. Joseph	18	37	8.94	36	4
Total	208	32	10.26	22	3
Six					
Callahan	209	36	10.72	26	4
St. Joseph	20	39	9.73	32	4
Total	229	36	10.65	26	4
Seven					
Burrillville Jr. H. S.	207	38	9.99	16	3
St. Joseph	24	43	8.05	28	4
Total	231	39	9.88	18	3

[a]The national norms corresponding to the mean scores of Burrillville students should be interpreted with caution since the time of testing and the local population are not consistent with those of the national sample.

APPENDIX B

Examples of Students' Work from the Classroom Activities Associated with the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Project.

- May - THE JUMPING BEAN STORY

(re-telling the story Jumping Beans by)

The girl go gets some red beans. They're jumping beans. She doesn't know it.

She puts them in the pot. Then she goes upstairs and the beans pop. She goes back downstairs and they stop bouncing. She goes upstairs and cleans her room. They pop again.

Then she says she's going to sneak. Then she says, "Ah-ha I caught you.". She pulls them back to the store.

The man gives her the change back. The beans hop back to where they sposta be.

Our Book of Animals

by 4-3

Man's Best Friend by John Heppe	1
The Otters by Jay Makowski	2
My Cats by John LaPrade	3
Dinosaurs by Scott Hoppe	4
The Woodchuck by Roger Bacon	5
The Lion by Barry Buffary	6
An Orangutan by Lynn Bess	7
Cats by John LaPrade	8
The Chipmunk by Steve Merrissey	9
The Wolf and the Fox by Kathy Hartnett	10
The Story of Ponies by Pamela Gaucher	11
The Black Panther by David Hebert	12
Cats by Ed LaValley	13
Cats by Barbie Beane	14
Koalas by Nancy Finn	15
The Koalas by Maria Havao	16
The Dinosaur by Steve Leclair	17
Paddy Paws and Toddly by Lynn Bass	18
Dolphins by Joy Mast	19
The Story of Dinosaurs by Jesse Riel	20
Pandas by Debbie Dimuccio	21
Pandas by Kathy Hartnett	22
The Three Hamsters by Robert Roy	23
Clover by Camme Ianelli	24
The Cat and the Dog by Brenda Madeau	25
The King of the Beasts by Daniel Pepler	26
Comprehension Questions	27

Man's Best Friend

by John Hoppe

Some dogs are mean. Some dogs are friendly. I like dogs. Dogs are nice to be around. Dogs are fun to have races with. Dogs are fun lots of ways. Lots of dogs are playful.. Dogs can save lots of people. Dogs help people work. Dogs are loveable.

APPENDIX C

Interview and Observation Forms

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Teacher Interview

Teacher Name_____ Date_____

School_____ Interviewer_____

____Classroom Teacher; Grade Levels:_____

____Other:_____

1. Briefly describe the language experience project you are using.

2. How many students are involved in this project? _____

3. Is there a volunteer assisting you with this project; if so, how many times per week?

4. Have books purchased through Right to Read funding been made available to your students? _____

5. If so, is there a scheduled time for the students to look through and select these books; if so, when?

6. Is there a specific time scheduled for the students to read the selected books during the school day; if so, when?

7. Do you ever read with a child on a one-to-one basis; if so, do you ask the child questions about the reading material before he/she begins to read?

8. Are there "spinoffs" from your language experience project which affect any "non-involved" students?

9. How long will your project go on?

   Do you have any plans to continue this type of activity afterwards?

May I see examples of: children's work, word banks, language experience stories, etc?

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Observation Form

Teacher/Volunteer_____ Date_____

School_____ Observer_____

Is there evidence of:

1. student work (written, tape recorded, artistic) related to language experience activities; e.g. word banks, language experience stories, etc.?

2. written or artistic reaction to trips taken?

3. use of books from Right to Read collection?

4. scheduled time to select these books?

5. scheduled time for reading these books?

6. "spinoff" to other children?

7. continuation of these activities after "project" ends?

Time	Activity and Materials Used	Number of Children

APPENDIX D

Follow-up Evaluation Form

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Follow-Up Evaluation Form

School _____

1. Which teaching strategies presented during the Right to Read inservice sessions have you used?

2. a. Have you used materials presented or identified in the sessions? ____ Yes
____ No

b. If yes, list the materials and check whether they were used for yourself and/or for students.

MATERIALS USED	For Students	For Self

Questions 3-8 relate to the individual consulting services provided as a follow-up to the Right to Read group inservice sessions conducted last winter. Please respond to these questions with the follow-up consulting services in mind. Which consultant provided you with follow-up services?
____ Dr. Oehlkers ____ Dr. Eanet

3. How many times did you meet with the consultant at your school? _____

4. For how many of these times did a substitute (or some other staff member) take over your class while you talked to the consultant? _____

5. a. Did the consultant work with your students to demonstrate strategies you might use? ____ Yes
____ No

	Does Not Apply	Not at All		Some-what		Very Much
b. If yes, how useful did you find the demonstration(s)? (Circle one.)	X	1	2	3	4	5
6. In general, how useful did you find the series of follow-up consulting sessions?	X	1	2	3	4	5
7. How essential do you think these follow-up services were to your Right to Read efforts?	X	1	2	3	4	5
8. Have you done anything differently with your students as a result of the follow-up consulting sessions?	X	1	2	3	4	5

9. What other topic(s) would you like to see addressed in future Right to Read inservice sessions?

10. Please add any additional comments you would like to make:

APPENDIX E: Publicity Given to Volunteer Efforts removed due to poor reproducibility (news clipping from a newspaper)

APPENDIX F: Flier Announcing Coffee Hour Demonstrations and Publicity Associated with the Sessions removed due to poor reproducibility.

APPENDIX G

Examples of Materials Distributed to Encourage Parental Involvement in Reading Related Activities

Several pages were removed due to poor reproducibility.

Be a good listener. Listen to your child read, not in order to correct every word or to turn it into a reading lesson but to share in the activity. Many reading educators believe that if a child is understanding the printed message, it is not absolutely necessary that every word be read — either when reading silently or aloud. By listening to your child tell stories, ask questions, relate experiences and read to you, you are helping to develop your child's oral language and reading abilities.

Be willing to share. Life today is crowded with many things to do. Don't let it crowd out reading for you and your child. Arrange a time for you and your child to read together. You may read your own materials separately, or read the same story together. This can be at bedtime, or any other time of the day.

Provide reading related activities. There are many activities which are related to reading, and can be used to stimulate interest. One very important device is to have your child write stories or tell stories to you while you write them down. A child will be encouraged to see his or her own words in print and this will communicate the concept of reading and writing. A diary of experiences can also be stimulating. Storytelling can be great fun. You can take turns with your child in telling stories. Ghost stories, adventure stories, fairy tales, or simply made-up stories can bring people together. Reading games involving the guessing of story titles, names, characters, or plots can be lots of fun for the child. Role playing, by having the child act out parts of a story, can involve a child in the story. Comparisons of stories, either between different folktales or different types of adventure tales, can help a child recognize differences and similarities in events.

Where to get guidance. There are many people who would be glad to help you find ways to make reading interesting for your child. Talk to your child's teachers, the children's librarian at the school or the public library, or write to the Children's Book Council, 67 Irving Place, New York, New York 10003, and the American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611, for current lists of good books for children. (Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.)

Available from the International Reading Association for 50¢ each are eight small publications on parents and reading.

No. 877 *Why Read Aloud to Children?* by Julie M.T. Chan

No. 872 *What Books and Records Should I Get for My Preschooler?* by Norma Rogers

No. 870 *What Is Reading Readiness?* by Norma Rogers

No. 876 *How Can I Help My Child Get Ready to Read?* by Norma Rogers

No. 875 *How Can I Encourage My Primary-Grade Child to Read?* by Molly Kayes Ransbury

No. 874 *How Can I Help My Child Learn to Read English as a Second Language?* Marcia Baghban (Also available in Spanish)

No. 873 *How Does My Child's Vision Affect His Reading?* Donald W. Eberly

No. 871 *How Can I Get My Teenager to Read?* Rosemary Winebrenner

This brochure has been adapted from *How Can I Encourage My Primary-Grade Child to Read?* by Molly Kayes Ransbury, published by the International Reading Association and ERIC/CRIER.

International Reading Association
800 Barksdale Road
Newark, Delaware 19711 U.S.A.

RIGHT TO READ
BURRILLVILLE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
95 East Avenue
Harrisville, R. I. 02830

You Can Encourage Your Child To Read

YOU CAN ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO READ

Everyday, when your child goes to school, a great amount of time and effort is put into reading and language arts instruction. However, reading is not something just to be "learned." It is something your child should come to enjoy and look upon not only as useful but pleasurable as well. Schools are making great efforts to use attractive and interesting books in reading instruction, but your encouragement at home also plays a very important part in developing positive feelings about reading. Reading is not only for instruction, it's also for entertainment, enrichment, satisfaction, and fulfillment.

As a child grows into an adult, reading is something which should be enjoyed as well as used.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE READING INTEREST

People active in reading education have found several factors which greatly influence reading interest.

Age. Your child's age will determine, in part, what he or she will find interesting in a book. While the preschooler is interested in rhyming words, repetitions, characters the child's own age, bright colors, and fun things to feel, the older, primary-aged child will need more than bright colors and rhyming words. This child is moving towards adult behavior. Stories can be longer and more involved. The six to nine year old seeks stories involving a moral. A greater awareness of the world around your child will lead to an interest in stories dealing with justice, humor, peer relationships, exotic animals, and physical growth and development. (The children's librarian at your local library or your child's school librarian can suggest many good books.)

Sex. Today's society encourages individual differences rather than forcing boys and girls into sex role stereotypes: you should allow your children to read books that appeal to their natural interests. While it is still true that boys and girls do tend to have different interests, it is important to remember that not all children follow these patterns, or the patterns may not appear at the same time. Don't try to force your child into a mold.

Grade Level. Your child shouldn't be made to read books based on his or her school reading level. School reading levels are used for instructional purposes, not as a guide for leisure reading. Do you always read material which challenges your skill and vocabulary? Don't ask your child to do it. Talk to your child's teacher or the children's librarian at your local library for guidance on good books.

Exposure to books. The more your child is exposed to pleasurable reading activities, the greater will be his or her interest in reading. Read aloud to your child and provide books for browsing. While your child learns about the pleasures of reading from hearing you read aloud, other things will be noticed: you start reading a book from the front; you turn pages from right to left; you take good care of your books. These are important things for a child learning to read in school.

Availability of printed materials. If your child can't find something to read, your child won't be able to read. Having books, both hardback and paperback, magazines, and newspapers makes reading material available if your child wants to read. If your child has a collection of books, and a special place to keep the collection, the atmosphere will be better for reading.

Identification. Wise parents will provide their children with books that help create better self-understanding in relation to the world. At times your child may find it much easier to face personal problems by reading about someone with a similar problem.

Reward. A child needs to find satisfaction in reading. You can provide this by praising your child's reading, and he or she can find it through new knowledge, better self-awareness, and an emotional release that reading can offer.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STIMULATING INTEREST

Understanding the factors which affect reading interest can help you use those factors to encourage your child to read.

Know your child. What does your child find interesting? What does your child do for fun? Does your child have a particularly troubling concern? If you can answer these questions and understand your child's likes and dislikes, you will be in a better position to choose reading material which will interest the child.

Let your child know you think reading is important. If you enjoy reading, you are probably serving as a model that your child will follow. You can let your child know you think reading is important by offering praise for reading and by encouraging the use of reading to answer questions. Read to the child; this will both stimulate interest and show that you think reading is a worthwhile activity.

Encourage wide reading. No longer are "the classics" thought to be the only good form of reading. Encourage your child to use a wide range of reading materials, including children's magazines, newspapers, comics, folktales, adventure books, books with factual information, game instructions, labels, and street signs.

Go to the library. Libraries are not trying to hide their books—they're there for you and your child to use. The children's librarian can suggest good books. Let your child browse while you browse in the adult section. When your child is old enough, encourage visits to the library.

Guide your child's ability to scan. A quick look at the inside of a book can help your child decide if it's interesting and whether it's easy enough to read. If your child keeps getting books which are too difficult, this will stifle interest.

HELPING YOUR CHILDREN DISCOVER THEMSELVES

Their Self-Confidence

Confident children are aware of themselves. As infants they will find their toes, their elbows, their ears. You can play games with them to encourage these discoveries.

Knowledge of themselves, however, goes far beyond these initial discoveries by the time children are in school. By then, they know if others think well of them. They already have an opinion of themselves. If they feel good about themselves, they will be confident in school.

What can you do to assure your children's happiness and confidence?

Their Physical Abilities

Children love to run, skip, climb and engage in activities that test and strengthen physical capabilities. They feel good when they can control a ball or can make a pencil drawing of a desired shape. Self-confidence grows with each success. You can help to provide opportunities that develop ability for using muscles.

YOU CAN ENCOURAGE THEM TO Imitate Animals.

Play with Balls.

Vary the size of the ball depending upon your children's ability to handle it. An eight to twenty-four inch ball is a reasonable size.

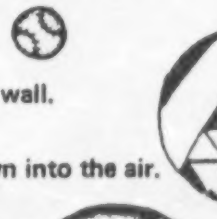
ROLL the ball from greater distances as ability increases.

BOUNCE the ball on the floor, to another person, against the wall.

THROW the ball to someone without bouncing it.

CATCH the ball when it is bounced or when it has been thrown into the air.

KICK the ball when it is rolled.



Respond to Music.

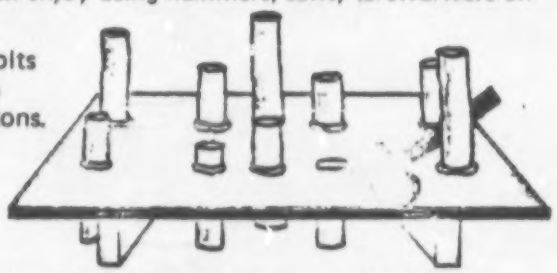
Music allows children to respond by jumping, running, rolling and tumbling. Rhythm and self-expression through body movement can help to develop individuality.

Singing games may also help children develop the vocabulary and rhyming skills necessary for success in beginning reading.

Use Tools and Manipulate Objects.

Provide safe, controlled situations that enable children to experiment with and learn the proper use of tools. Children enjoy using hammers, saws, screwdrivers on a workbench.

Let them screw and unscrew nuts, bolts or caps on empty bottles. Help them learn to manipulate zippers and buttons.



Balance.

To develop children's ability to control their bodies, have them walk a chalk line in a driveway or on a sidewalk, a string or yardstick on the floor. Help them learn to go forward, sideways and backwards.

HELPING YOUR CHILDREN DISCOVER THE WORLD AROUND THEM

Children develop knowledge through experience. They learn what sour is as their tongues touch a slice of lemon; soft when they stroke the fur of a kitten; pretty when they see a red rose; noisy when they hear fire engine sirens; and delicious when they sniff cookies baking. Different and interesting activities promote meaningful learning.

APPENDIX H

Pretest Results Regarding Parental-
At-Home Activities Related to Reading

TABLE 7

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Results of Parent Survey
February, 1977

Activity	Number of Responses	Mean (Range: 1-3)	Standard Deviation
How often do you:			
1. ask your child what book(s) he/she is reading in school?	150	2.3	.77
2. read a book to your child at home or have him/her read to you?	148	2.2	.84
3. encourage your child to go to the library by him/herself?	143	1.9	.83
4. read newspapers or magazines with your child?	150	2.2	.81
5. help your child with reading homework?	146	2.4	.79
6. bring a book or magazine home for your child to read?	151	2.2	.77
7. talk with your child about something he/she has written at school?	151	2.7	.58
8. suggest specific books or articles for your child to read?	153	2.1	.80
9. encourage your child to write letters to friends or relatives?	152	1.8	.82
10. help your child with reading activities that were suggested by his/her teachers?	147	2.3	.80
Total	156	21 (Range of 10-30)	4.4

TABLE 7 (Continued)

Item	Number of Times	Number of Responses	Percent of 156
Circle the number of times you have taken your child to the library during this school year.	0 and missing	57	37%
	1	17	11%
	2	10	7%
	3	8	5%
	4	8	5%
	5	11	7%
	6	9	6%
	7	2	1%
	8	8	5%
	9	0	0%
	10	2	1%
	more than ten	24	15%
Total		156	100%

APPENDIX I

Pretest Results from the Inventory of Reading Attitude and the Estes Reading Attitude Scale Grades One through Seven

TABLE 8

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

An Inventory of Reading Attitude
Pretest Number, Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean Percent Positive Response
For Grades One through Six

Grade/School	Number Tested	Mean (Highest Possible Score = 25)	Standard Deviation	Mean Percent Positive Response
One				
Levy	72	16.03	4.96	64%
St. Joseph	13	15.92	3.90	64%
Total	85	16.01	4.79	64%
Two				
Levy	73	16.48	4.56	66%
St. Joseph	15	18.40	4.27	74%
Total	88	16.81	4.55	67%
Three				
Pascoag	97	15.47	4.33	62%
St. Joseph	18	13.39	4.72	54%
Total	115	15.14	4.43	60%
Four				
Pascoag	27	13.74	4.95	55%
[illegible]allahan	84	14.79	5.20	59%
St. Joseph	20	13.95	4.70	56%
Total	131	14.44	5.06	58%

TABLE 8 (Continued)

Grade/School	Number Tested	Mean (Highest Possible Score = 25)	Standard Deviation	Mean Percent Positive Response
Five				
Callahan	183	14.06	5.31	56%
St. Joseph	18	14.57	3.54	58%
Total	201	14.10	5.17	56%
Six				
Callahan	203	12.47	5.80	50%
St. Joseph	20	12.80	4.42	51%
Total	223	12.50	5.68	50%
Overall Total	843	14.40	5.27	58%

TABLE 9

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Estes Reading Attitude Scale
Pretest Number, Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean Percent Positive Response
Grade Seven

School	Number Tested	Mean (Range: 20-100)	Standard Deviation	Mean Percent Positive Response
Burrillville Jr. H. S.	191	72.33	13.77	65%
St. Joseph	23	73.04	15.36	66%
Total	214	72.40	13.92	65%

APPENDIX J: "Reading is Fundamental" handout, publicity and thank-you note, removed due to poor reproducibility.

APPENDIX K

Pretest Results from the Self-Appraisal Inventory. Grades One through Seven.

TABLE 10

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Self Appraisal Inventory (Primary Level)
Pretest Number, Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean Percent Positive Response
By Grade, School, and Overall Total

Grade/School	Number Tested	Mean (Highest Possible Score = 20)	Standard Deviation	Mean Percent Positive Response
One				
Levy	71	13.54	2.55	68%
St. Joseph	13	13.23	2.95	66%
Total	84	13.49	2.60	67%
Two				
Levy	76	13.38	2.90	67%
St. Joseph	15	15.40	1.77	77%
Total	91	13.71	2.84	69%
Three				
Pascoag	97	12.24	3.33	61%
St. Joseph	17	13.06	3.56	65%
Total	114	12.36	3.36	62%
Overall Total for Primary Level	289	13.11	3.05	66%

TABLE 11

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Self Appraisal Inventory (Intermediate Level)
Pretest Number, Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean Percent Positive Response
By Grade, School and Overall Total

Grade/School	Number Tested	Mean (Highest Possible Score = 19)	Standard Deviation	Mean Percent Positive Response
Four				
Pascoag	27	11.74	2.25	62%
Callahan	82	12.04	2.47	63%
St. Joseph	20	12.40	2.23	65%
Total	129	12.03	2.38	63%
Five				
Callahan	184	12.21	2.41	64%
St. Joseph	18	11.61	2.40	61%
Total	202	12.16	2.41	64%
Six				
Callahan	197	12.29	2.27	65%
St. Joseph	20	11.60	2.80	62%
Total	217	12.24	2.33	64%
Overall Total for Intermediate Level	548	12.16	2.37	64%

TABLE 12

BRONCOS READING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Self-Appraisal Inventory (Secondary Level)
Pretest Number, Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean Percent Positive Response
By Grade and School

Grade/School	Number Tested	Mean (Range: 16-64)	Standard Deviation	Mean Percent Positive Response
Seven				
Burrillville Junior High School	191	41.69	3.86	54%
St. Joseph	23	42.13	3.78	54%
Total	214	41.74	3.84	54%